

**METHOD FOR PREPARING CHEESE PRODUCTS
AND PROCESS CHEESE BASES**

Abstract of the Invention

5 The present invention provides a method for preparing cheese products, and process cheese bases for use in the production of process cheese. The method generally comprises mixing one or more concentrated powders derived from milk with sodium chloride, milk fat, water, and, optionally, an edible acid and/or a preservative for a period of time sufficient 10 to produce a well-mixed, homogeneous product, and cooling the resulting mixture for a time and at a temperature which is sufficient to allow the mixture to form a solid matrix. The solid matrix can be consumed, or can be used as a substitute for natural cheese and ground by a cheese grinding system during the production of process cheese. The present invention also provides 15 cheese products and process cheese bases prepared according to this method, and to process cheeses produced with the process cheese bases.

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